

**Agenda – American Comparative Literature Association Board Meeting
Austin TX 7 January 2016 6 PM**

In attendance Yopie Prins, Joseph Slaughter, Wail Hasssan, Lea Pao, Maximillian Alvarez, Alexander Beecroft, Chris Bush, Ali Behdad, Yogita Goyal, Eleni Coundouriotis Caroline Eckhardt (David Palumbo-Liu and Antonio Barrenechea, members-elect of the board, were also present).

1. Discussion of Texas SB 11, Relating to the carrying of handguns on the campuses of and certain other locations associated with institutions of higher education: It was agreed unanimously to issue a statement on behalf of the ACLA board concurring with other learned societies in their condemnation of Texas SB 11.
2. Report on the state of the State of the Discipline Report: The Secretary-Treasurer reported on behalf of the Report Managing Editor, Ursula Heise, that the editorial board had reached a decision on which pieces from the Report website would be included in the published volume, and which extra pieces would be commissioned. The process of editing has begun, and the contract for the print volume will be signed with Routledge at MLA. Submission of the print volume is anticipated in 2016.
There was general discussion of lessons learned from this iteration of the Report for future versions. It was felt that, while this Report has far surpassed all others in the range of contributions, both in terms of themes and in terms of contributors, that the Report had been somewhat less successful than hoped at generating unsolicited submissions and website comments. There was discussion that the next report should continue to move in the direction of inclusion and interactivity. The possibility was discussed of issuing some sort of midterm report, possibly focusing on the pedagogical issues which were not thoroughly discussed in this Report.
3. Bylaws Committee: Joseph Slaughter presented on the progress his Bylaws Committee has made to date on the questions it has been discussing. He expressed the need to consult with a lawyer regarding many of the issues under discussion, particularly in terms of the board's fiduciary responsibility and its obligations under its articles of constitution and bylaws, and what the consequences would be for the organization in terms of these questions if we began to take positions on controversial issues where there was a dispute about the relevance of the issue to the Association's mission. It was agreed that members of the Executive Committee should confer with a lawyer regarding these issues before proceeding further with the discussion of changes to the bylaws. Yopie Prins suggested that it might be advisable to construct two committees: one to explore the vision and mission of the organization and whether there was any need to make changes to the language concerning these things in the Articles and Bylaws; and one to discuss changes to the bylaws. It was agreed that Emily Apter and David Palumbo-Liu would consult with the MLA on the procedures that organization has in place to deal with concerns arising from the membership, and it was further agreed that any changes to the bylaws should be discussed at an open meeting at an ACLA conference.

4. **Financial Report:** Chris Bush gave a brief report as finance committee chair. After a challenging year financially, with high A/V costs and relatively low attendance in Seattle, there are signs that the 2016 Cambridge conference will be in a stronger position financially, with both higher numbers and with more manageable costs for A/V and catering (although there are signs these costs may be higher than previously anticipated). Bush also notified the Board that our financial advisors at Highlander Capital will no longer be able to perform that work pro bono for us; it was agreed that we should officially thank them for their efforts, and seek out new financial management, fee-charging if necessary. Bush also drew the Board's attention to our accountant's reminder that revenues from things such as the book exhibit and advertising in the program incur the risk of Unrelated Business Taxable Income (UBTI), and that we need to be mindful of this issue as we proceed.
Discussed later in the meeting, but pertaining to the purview of the Finance Committee, it was agreed that it would be desirable to raise more funds for graduate student travel in order to enable larger and more meaningful grants to be issued, as opposed to the current \$200.
There was discussion of the need to present an annual budget for the board's review, per ACLA bylaws. The Secretariat and the Finance Committee will work together on budget procedures.
5. **Publications Committee Report:** Yogita Goyal reported on the progress on preparing the upcoming two ACLA Forum sections in Comparative Literature. The first has encountered some delays due to the withdrawal of two contributors and has been moved to June. The second (on Oceanic Roots) is soliciting contributions by April 1 for publication in 2017. So far there has been only one submission for the Helen Tartar First Book Subvention. Applications are due early in the year, and it was agreed to re-publicize the competition and to extend the deadline if necessary. It was agreed, further, to discuss funding for the Helen Tartar First Book Subvention fund in more detail at our next board meeting, and to pursue using some of the space at the bottom of the Association homepage to solicit contributions.
6. **Update on elections process and results.** Wail Hassan confirmed the election of David Palumbo-Liu as Second Vice-President, of Antonio Barrenechea as Nominations Committee Chair, and (after a runoff election) Adhira Mangalagiri as Graduate Student Representative for 2016-18. It was agreed that the new timeline, with elections in November, has worked well, and should be continued.
7. **Report from Graduate Student Representatives:** The Graduate Student Representatives updated the Board on the events they will be sponsoring at the ACLA 2016 conference in Cambridge MA. They are in contact with G1 graduate students at Harvard to plan the "nuts and bolts" job-market session for the Saturday, to be organized in coordination with the ADPCL. On the Friday at lunch there will be a session on Mental Health in the Humanities, participants TBD, and on the Thursday, as the graduate student-organized pre-conference workshop there will be a session on "Writing on the Side."
8. **ACL(x) 2016:** The next ACL(x) will be held Sept 23-24, 2016, at Penn State; a hotel contract is already in place. Theme and other questions will be discussed later. It was agreed that the ACLA could continue to offer the ACL(x) conference a grant of \$5000.

9. Future conference locations: After Cambridge in 2016, and Utrecht in 2017, plans are now in place for the next two conferences after that: UCLA 2018, where Ali Behdad has secured \$50 000 in local funding, and Georgetown 2019, where local organizers have already achieved \$30 000 in fundraising. There were informal discussions about possible locations for the 2020 conference. Given the amount of local labor involved in organizing campus conferences, and the increasing tendency for the costs of those conferences to converge with those of hotel-based conferences, it was agreed that the ACLA should look at the possibility of organizing more hotel-based conferences, possibly with the assistance of conference planning firms.
10. Discussion of the role of the ADPCL: The ADPCL has recently been re-certified as an affiliated organization by the MLA; this is important, as it ensures that the ADPCL has the option of sharing their free MLA session with the ACLA. Upcoming elections to the ADPCL board will renew that organization's administration, and will take place as soon as candidate statements have been received. The goal will be to constitute the new board in advance of the next ACLA conference, so that the new President of the ADPCL can make a presentation to our board.
11. Review of new Seminar and Paper proposal systems
 - a. discussion of "two per institution" and "50% graduate student" rules: Because of time considerations, these issues were postponed until the next board meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Alexander Beecroft,
Secretary-Treasurer.